

Message Text

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53

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EA-11 ADP-00 IO-12 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09

H-02 INR-09 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01

SS-14 USIA-12 RSR-01 /111 W
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R 201255 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3517

INFO AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

USINT CAIRO

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E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, RP, XF, MY

SUBJECT: ISLAMIC FOREIGN MINISTERS' CONFERENCE

SUMMARY: JIDDA PRESS HEADLINES REJECTION OF FILIPINO
BID TO ATTEND ISLAMIC CONFERENCE AS OBSERVORS. HEAD
OF MALAYSIAN DELEGATION TO CONFERENCE QUOTED AS
WARNING ARABS THEIR INTERNAL DISPUTES CAN PREVENT
CONFERENCE FROM REALIZING ITS GOALS. END SUMMARY.

1. SEVERAL JIDDA PAPERS MORNING MARCH 20 CARRIED PRESS
ANNOUNCEMENT BY ISLAMIC SECRETARIAT'S SECRETARY GENERAL
TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN REJECTING BID BY PHILIPPINES TO SEND
DELEGATION TO ISLAMIC FOREIGN MINISTERS' CONFERENCE ,
OPENING MARCH 24 IN LIBYA. TUNKU QUOTED AS SAYING
FILIPINO GOVERNMENT HAD ORIGINALLY MADE REQUESTS TO SEND
DELEGATION, IN OBSERVOR STATUS, THROUGH INDONESIAN
EMBASSY IN JIDDA, AND SUBSEQUENTLY THRU ITS EMBASSY IN
CAIRO. PAPERS ADDED THAT SOURCES IN ISLAMIC SECRETARIAT
SAY, HOWEVER, A FEW NON- GOVERNMENT FILIPINO MUSLIMS MAY
ATTEND CONFERENCE AS OBSERVORS.

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2. REST OF NEWS RELEASE OUTLINED HISTORY OF DISCRIMINATION AND PERSECUTION OF FILIPINO MUSLIMS, AND INCLUDED REFERENCE TO DOCUMENTS WHICH WILL BE PRESENTED AT CONFERENCE REVEALING FILIPINO GOVERNMENT PLOT AIMED AT " LIQUIDATING ISLAMIC PRESENCE IN SOUTHERN REGION OF THE PHILIPPINES." GOVERNMENT PLAN SAID TO INVOLVE TAKING POSSESSION OF FARMING LAND OWNED BY MUSLIMS BY MEANS OF LEGISLATION AND THEN REDISTRIBUTING LAND ON BASIS OF 4 HECTATES TO EACH MUSLIM FAMILY AND 144 HECTARES TO EACH CHRISTIAN FAMILY.

3. IN RELATED EVENT, WHICH WAS HEADLINED IN JIDDA DAILY AL- MADINA, HEAD OF MALAYSIAN DELEGATION GAFAR BABA (APPARENTLY SPEAKING AT KUALA LUMPUR AIRPORT PRIOR TO HIS DEPARTURE) CRITICIZED, IN STRONG LANGUAGE, DISUNITY OF ARAB RANKS. BABA SAID ARGUEMENTS AMONST ARAB COUNTRIES CAN PREVENT ISLAMIC CONFERENCE FROM ACHIEVING ITS GOALS. FURTHERMORE, HE ADDED, IF ARAB STATES FAIL TO MEET THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES, THEN OTHER, NON- ARAB MUSLIM STATES, WILL ASSUME LEADERSHIP OF ISLAMIC WORLD.

4. COMMENT: SAUDI ARABIA TRADITIONALLY NO DOUBT MORE INTERESTED THAN ALMOST ANY OTHER PARTICIPANT IN OUTCOME OF CONFERENCE, AND HENCE, USUALLY PROVIDES FULL ADVANCE PRESS PLAY. NONETHELESS, IT WOULD APPEAR CONFERENCE THIS YEAR IS LIKELY TO BE MORE LIVELY AFFAIR THAN EARLIER ONES , IF ARABS INSIST ON CONDEMNATION OF PHILIPPINES WHILE MALAYSIANS, AND PERHAPS OTHERS, CONDEMN ARABS FOR THEIR INTERNECINE SQUABBLES.
THACHER

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